



Ellie De'Ath

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Dad and daughter take to the skies to raise money for children's

hospices

Staverton-based dad and daughter Andy and Ellie De'Ath have shown nerves of steel by taking on a skydive, raising more than £2,500 in aid of a local children's hospices charity and national charity, [Together for Short Lives](#).

The daring duo took to the skies on Sunday 15 September at Dunkeswell Airfield in Devon, where they were strapped to an instructor to take part in their first tandem skydive. After climbing to a height of 15,000 feet, they braced themselves for a 60-second free fall at 125mph followed by a gentle glide to the ground.

Andy, who has been General Manager at Center Parcs Longleat Forest for 15 years, was first introduced to the charity Together for Short Lives when Center Parcs UK adopted them as its corporate charity in 2016. Since then, he's teamed up with a friend to cycle 575km through America in 2017 and joined the team at Longleat Forest for two successful volunteering days, taking the Center Parcs experience to families at children's hospice Charlton Farm.

Seventeen-year-old Ellie, who is currently studying Business, Sociology and English, wanted to raise money after seeing the work Charlton Farm do. She said: "I went with my dad to volunteer at Charlton Farm and I immediately saw the incredible work the team there do and how much it benefits all of the families who visit the hospice. We started talking about how we could help more and that's where the idea of jumping out of a plane came from!"

"Ellie is an adrenaline junkie," said Andy. "But on the day I think we were both feeling a mixture of nerves and terror! My lasting memory from the day was watching Ellie jump – one minute she was sitting on the edge of the plane and the next she was gone!"

Ellie added: "It was a brilliant feeling – the rush of free falling followed by the bizarre quiet when the parachute opened and then drifting to the ground. It was a real sense of achievement and dad and I both had big grins on our faces at the end of it."

"We couldn't have done this without the support of our family, friends and colleagues and we'd like to thank everyone who donated to this fantastic cause," said Andy. "I don't think I would do it again, but Ellie has caught the bug. She's planning to gather some friends to do something similar in the future and her sister Jess is pretty sold on the idea after cheering us on!"

Together for Short Lives is the UK's leading charity for children living with life-limiting conditions and their families. They ensure no child or family is ever left behind when it comes to getting vital care and support. As part of the corporate partnership, each Center Parcs village is also supporting their

local children's hospice through fundraising events and volunteering. Center Parcs Longleat Forest is supporting [Children's Hospice South West](#), with their closest hospice being Charlton Farm in Wraxall.

If you want to donate to Ellie and Andy's fundraising, visit their [JustGiving page](#).

Notes to Editors

- Center Parcs UK has been a separate company to Center Parcs Europe since 2001; the two organisations only share a brand name and the core concept of family short breaks in the forest.
- Center Parcs UK has five villages across the UK; Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, Elveden Forest in Suffolk, Longleat Forest in Wiltshire, Whinfell Forest in Cumbria and Woburn Forest in Bedfordshire. Each village is nestled within 350-400 acres of woodland with a variety of activities to choose from, restaurants and cafes. There is also a Subtropical Swimming Paradise and award-winning spa called Aqua Sana.
- Center Parcs UK offers weekend, (Friday to Monday) or midweek (Monday to Friday) breaks and welcomes more than 2.1 million guests each year, with 96% of guests expressing an intention to return. Visit England recently awarded the company five stars for all sites (scoring each village between 90% and 98%), making comments about the friendly nature and efficiency of the staff and the quality and cleanliness of the facilities.
- As the leader in the UK short break holiday market, Center Parcs UK achieves average annual occupancy in excess of 97%.

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